

force provider, in addition to having the geographic responsibility for the Atlantic Ocean and the Supreme Commander of NATO. Currently, there is no permanent joint experimentation process. Each of the services has its own.

My bill would create a Joint Forces Command, similar to the way Congress created the Special Operations command in 1991. The Joint Forces Command would be the force provider for the geographic CINC's, oversee joint training and experimentation, and coordinate and integrate the service battle labs.

Goldwater-Nichols pushed the military into jointness in carrying out military operations. We do not have the level of jointness needed to prepare for military operations. We also do not have a permanent joint experimentation process to help us make smart procurement decisions and to develop joint doctrine, both of which will be indispensable.

Since the QDR and NDP reports, virtually every witness before the National Security Committee, who has been asked, has acknowledged that this transformation process is one of the most important and one of the most difficult challenges our country faces over the next few years. DOD witnesses have testified that these issues are being considered and worked by each service. I do not want to replace that. I do want to bring the service's work together, and the Joint Forces Command will help to focus these variety of initiatives into an efficient, joint force.

I hope that this proposal will spawn others. I hope that Congress and the military and outside experts will engage in full and fruitful dialogue about where we need to go and how we can get there. My goal is to make sure that Congress fulfills its responsibilities to see that this transformation takes place so that we can continue to provide for the common defense into the next century.

#### TRIBUTE TO HERB WHEELER

### HON. JOHN W. OLVER

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 13, 1998*

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the community leadership of my constituent, Mr. Herb Wheeler of Athol, Massachusetts.

On May 20th, 1998, the North Quabbin Chamber of Commerce will be honoring Mr. Wheeler as Citizen of the Year. Mr. Wheeler is the co-owner, with his wife Colleen, of Flowerland Florist, located in Athol. The prestigious Citizen of the Year award is given to the person who has most exemplified selfless dedication to the pursuit of economic prosperity for the North Quabbin region.

From the beginning of his career, Herb Wheeler understood how important a thriving retail climate was for Main Street, not only to his own success, but to that of the whole town. Herb has worked diligently to bring retail businesses into Athol's downtown. His interest and involvement led him to the Athol Merchant's Association, of which he eventually became president. Through Herb's leadership, this organization grew into a group who's proactive commitment to economic development is unsurpassed in the region.

Herb Wheeler has become even more involved in his community as the years have

progressed. In addition to his leadership role with the Athol Merchant's Association, Herb is an executive board member of the North Quabbin Chamber of Commerce, a board member of Athol-Orange Public Access Television, and a member of the Athol/Royalston School District Building Committee.

I join the Chamber in saluting Herb Wheeler's contributions, and look forward to working with Herb and the North Quabbin Chamber of Commerce on future economic development endeavors.

#### 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF AMERICAN LEGION POST #1172

### HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 13, 1998*

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the 50th Anniversary of American Legion Post #1172 in Evansville, Illinois. On Memorial Day, the Post will hold a special program in honor of this milestone.

While celebrating its 50th anniversary, Post #1172 will also be honoring several members for fifty years of continuous membership. Members recognized at the ceremony will be: John H. Bauer, Herbert Diercks, Clarence Jany, Edgar Kisro, Ralph Moll, Michael R. Otten, Glen U. Simpson, and Charles Suhre. John H. Bauer and Edgar Kisro both have the additional distinction of being charter members of Post #1172.

It is fitting that the Post hold this celebration on Memorial Day. Memorial Day is traditionally a special day for the members of the American Legion, and for our nation. It is a day for people across the nation gather to honor brave men and women who gave their lives so that we may live in freedom. Members of Post #1172 are proud of that service. Today, we honor their sacrifice on our behalf as well as joining them in celebrating this special anniversary.

Southern Illinois has a strong tradition of honoring the soldiers who have defended our honor and our nation. At its earliest inception Memorial Day was known as Decoration Day. Major General John A. Logan, of Illinois, declared the first national Decoration Day in 1868 to honor the war dead. A stone in a cemetery in Carbondale, Illinois states that the first Decoration Day ceremony took place there in 1866.

General Logan ordered soldiers' graves to be decorated with these words: "We should guard their graves with sacred vigilance. Let no neglect, no ravages of time, testify to the present or to the coming generations that we have forgotten as a people the cost of a free and undivided republic."

General Logan's words are as true today as they were 130 years ago. As Southern Illinois continues this fine tradition of observing Memorial Day, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring American Legion Post #1172 and all of our nation's veterans.

HONORING VINCENT A. BERGAMO  
FOR 40 YEARS OF SERVICE AS A  
NEW YORK STATE RACING OFFICIAL

### HON. MAURICE D. HINCHEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 13, 1998*

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to recognize the retirement of Vincent A. Bergamo from the New York State Racing and Wagering Board. After forty years of service, Vince leaves behind a legacy in the sport of harness racing that will forever be a testament to his deep-rooted love of horses and racing. His enthusiasm and experience will surely be missed.

I have had the pleasure of knowing Vince for several years. He has impressed me as a man of great character and integrity and I am fortunate to call him a friend. His career as a racing judge was characterized by hard-work and dedication and his contributions have left a lasting effect on the industry.

Vincent Bergamo began his distinguished career in 1958 at the Monticello Raceway in Monticello, New York as an Assistant Race Secretary. Having grown up with a keen appreciation for horses, Vince immediately excelled around the track. He was quickly offered a position in Saratoga, New York as presiding judge. He was 24 at the time, the youngest presiding judge in the state.

Vince's love of harness racing and his enthusiasm for his job brought him to every track in New York as well as tracks in Florida, Maryland, New Hampshire and Pennsylvania. Throughout all of these locations, Vince set the standard for judging. He was honest, fair and demanded the highest degree of competitiveness from the participants of his races. He was also the recipient of numerous accolades recognizing his accomplishments.

Mr. Speaker, aside from judging, Vince tackled several other tasks in harness racing. On a purely voluntary basis, he became actively involved in the Goshen Historic Track—realizing that the track as the oldest exiting sporting site in the nation at that time. He has been credited with leading the crusade that saved the track. His efforts directly led to the listing of the track on the National Register of Historic Sites. Vince remains actively involved in the operation of this track and continues to promote racing throughout New York, the United States, and even the world—Vince's creation, the popular Billings Amateur Series has lasted some 16 years and has attracted international attention.

Looking past Vince's professional awards and accomplishments, and there are many, it is clear that above all else, Vince is a family man. While maintaining an extraordinarily active career, Vince, along with his wonderful wife, raised 10 beautiful children. He was, and remains today, active in all aspects of their lives.

Mr. Speaker, it is not often that a man like Vince Bergamo comes along. He is the epitome of class and integrity and his accomplishments both professionally and personally are remarkable. I invite my colleagues to join me in honoring Vincent Bergamo for 40 years of dedicated service and in wishing Vince, his wife, and his entire family many more years of health and happiness.